

8.3 LMM 25/06/2024 - CITY OF NEWCASTLE RECORD LOW DA PROCESSING TIMES

MOTION

That Council:

- 1 Congratulates the Planning and Environment Directorate for the development and implementation of an industry leading Accelerated Development Application system, which has resulted in significant improvements in development assessment timeframes since it was introduced two years ago.
- 2 Notes that so far this financial year over 1,230 development applications have been determined, in an average of 37 days. This has resulted in over \$680 million worth of approved development across the LGA, which has included over 1050 dwellings.
- 3 Notes that the implementation of the Accelerated Development Application system has cut development application processing times by 30%, and that suitable applications are now able to be fast-tracked and determined in an average of 7 days.
- 4 Commends the Planning and Environment team for achieving the lowest number of undetermined DAs in ten years, with the number of undetermined applications falling to a record low of just 235 in May.
- 5 Notes that for nearly a decade, City of Newcastle has been planning for future growth and higher densities to facilitate housing opportunities within the Newcastle Local Government Area, increasing housing diversity close to transport, infrastructure, and social amenity; and with the ADA system determining forthcoming DAs promptly, Newcastle is well placed to be a significant contributor to the State's recently announced housing targets.
- 6 Continues to explore opportunities to further highlight the success of the Accelerated Development Application system, and collaborate with other government authorities on its adoption state-wide.

BACKGROUND:

Newcastle leading the way in housing approvals

Newcastle is at the forefront of the State's housing supply pipeline, recording the third highest number of building approvals for new dwellings in NSW this financial year.

Figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show 920 dwellings, worth more than \$476 million, have been approved for construction in Newcastle this financial year in the five months to the end of November 2023, with the city accounting for over five per cent of the State's dwelling approvals (18,316).

Newcastle is ranked only behind the Western Sydney regions of The Hills Shire (1579) and Blacktown (1442), and had more than double the dwelling approvals of other Hunter council areas including Cessnock (439) and Lake Macquarie (417).

Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes said Newcastle was leading the way in the supply of housing in the Hunter and across the State thanks to decades of forward planning by City of Newcastle (CN).

"For more than a decade, City of Newcastle has been planning for future growth and higher densities to facilitate housing opportunities for the local government area, by increasing housing diversity close to transport, infrastructure, and social amenity," Cr Nelmes said.

"We are recognised for our streamlined planning development assessment pathways, which further positions our city as an attractive place to build.

"In the 2022/23 financial year City of Newcastle approved almost 1500 new dwellings and it is pleasing to see these projects now flowing through into the construction phase, with commencement approval for 920 houses, units and apartments.

"As significant levels of residential development continue to unfold across our city, we will continue meeting the housing targets set by the NSW Government while supporting positive outcomes for the local economy, construction industry, and the creation of thousands of direct and indirect jobs."

The latest forecasts show the Newcastle local government area (LGA) population is set to increase by 41,150 residents to 202,050 by 2041, which will stimulate demand for almost 20,000 new dwellings.

Based on the supply pipeline within the Newcastle LGA, CN met the new dwelling demand by 2021 early and is on track to meet its demand for 2026 and 2041.

City of Newcastle's Planning and Environment Executive Director Michelle Bisson said CN is on track to meet its new housing targets.

"CN has also been planning for future growth and higher densities to facilitate housing opportunities for our community through our work on the renewal corridors, Wickham Masterplan and currently through our collaboration with the Department of Planning on the Broadmeadow Place Strategy," Ms Bisson said.

"We hope to work with the NSW Government to support Local Government in facilitating faster housing approvals through a statewide roll out of City of Newcastle's innovative Accelerated Development Application (ADA) pathway.

"CN's award-winning ADA pathway fast tracked more than 20 per cent of the city's \$1.5 billion development pipeline, determining the applications in less than 10 days, during the 2022/23 financial year.

"By streamlining lower risk developments, staff time can be focused on more complex proposals and determine medium to high residential developments faster."

Building Approvals, FYTD as at end of November 2023 (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics)								
		New houses	New other residential building	Total dwellings	Value of new houses	Value of new other residential building	Value of alterations & additions including conversions to residential building	Value of total residential building
Rank in NSW	LGA	no.	no.	no.	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
3	Newcastle	81	837	920	39,199	398,994	38,224	476,417
12	Cessnock	357	78	439	146,186	19,928	6,794	172,908
13	Lake Macquarie	297	120	417	141,189	40,960	37,747	219,895
15	Maitland	216	153	370	89,325	47,648	12,593	149,566
40	Port Stephens	67	41	108	32,830	11,438	11,921	56,189
68	Singleton	27	5	33	15,895	1,706	2,783	20,384
73	Dungog	26	0	27	12,385	0	2,361	14,747
79	Muswellbrook	17	2	19	8,640	480	1,269	10,388
89	Upper Hunter Shire	13	0	13	6,521	0	2,077	8,598
TOTAL	New South Wales	9,816	8,318	18,316	5,009,060	3,917,363	1,673,325	10,599,749

19 January 2024.